

Disabled by “Repair”: The Textual and
Extratextual Prosthesis of F. Scott
Fitzgerald’s *The (Love of the) Last Tycoon*



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Thesis: *The (Love of the) Last Tycoon* is a disabled text that depends on both textual and extratextual prostheses to make it appear whole.

- Definitions of “narrative prosthesis” and “normal” text
- Narrative prosthesis in *The (Love of the) Last Tycoon*
- Extratextual prostheses (synopses and introductions)
- How to read disabled texts
- Responsibly reading *The (Love of the) Last Tycoon*

Narrative Prosthesis

Every text has a “perpetual discursive dependency upon disability” to begin (Mitchell and Snyder 222).

What Makes a Text “Normal”?

Distinct beginning, middle, and end

“the end represents the plot as strategic abnormality overcome” (Davis 330-31).

Narrative Prosthesis and Disability in *The (Love of the) Last Tycoon*

“[n]ot half a dozen men have ever been able to keep the whole equation of pictures in their heads” (*The Love of the Last Tycoon* 3).

“was due to die very soon now. Within six months one could say definitely” (109-10).

Disability “surface[s] to explain everything or nothing with respect to [characters’] portraits as embodied beings” (Mitchell and Snyder 225).

Wilson Foreword vs. Brucoli Introduction

Wilson:

“[i]t has been possible to supplement this unfinished draft with an outline of the rest of the story as Fitzgerald intended to develop it” (Wilson x).

Brucoli:

evaluations of the text “ha[ve] been impeded because the working drafts have heretofore been published only in the cosmeticized text edited by Edmund Wilson more than fifty years ago” (Introduction xiii).

How to Read Unfinished Texts

No “unfinished” tagline

No introductions, note, synopses, facsimiles, etc.

Just the text

“there is almost never such a thing as a single, stable text” (Young 633).

Reading *The (Love of the) Last Tycoon*

Breaks between episodes

Original text

STAHR: A Romance

“The only title page that survives with the draft material names the work ‘STAHR / A Romance’” (Bruccoli, Introduction xiv).

“For Further Information”

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